



Deborah A. Gist
Commissioner

State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Shepard Building
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Dear Friends of Education,

Over the past five years, our work toward transforming education in Rhode Island has moved at a brisk pace, guided by our 2010-2015 Strategic Plan, *Transforming Education in Rhode Island*.

It is now time to develop a new plan, one that maintains our commitment to improving public education while setting new priorities, strategies, and goals. Just as the educational environment has changed over the past five years, the planning process must also change. Our new plan will be for, from, and about all Rhode Islanders, and we will build this plan through a statewide conversation.

As a first step in this conversation, we are asking all Rhode Islanders to share with us their views on education through a short survey that will take no more than five minutes to complete. We want to hear from as many Rhode Islanders as possible, and I am seeking your help.

I would be very grateful if you could share this five-minute [survey](#) with your community members, your neighbors, your friends, and your professional networks - and of course please complete the survey yourself!

Please feel free to direct people in your community to this URL to access the survey:
www.ride.ri.gov/Strategic-Plan-Survey.

Here is a link to the Spanish-language version of the survey:
www.ride.ri.gov/Strategic-Plan-Survey-ES

Second, the Board of Education is recruiting and selecting a community team that will work directly with us to develop and write the strategic plan over the course of the next seven months. The Board members and I are seeking 12 to 15 Rhode Islanders willing to serve on this Ambassador Design Team to work together and build a plan of which can all be proud. David Moscarelli, the 2015 Rhode Island Teacher of the Year, will facilitate the work of the design team. The Board hopes to attract a diverse and high-quality pool of applicants from which to select the members of the design team. You can apply [online](#) to join the Ambassador Design team.

I am seeking your help in making a direct outreach to anyone in your community whom you think would be interested, willing, and able to serve on this design team. The application to serve on the team is posted on our website, at:
www.ride.ri.gov/Ambassador-Design-Team-Application

Additionally, as the design and development process moves along, we will follow up on the survey by seeking richer and deeper information from Rhode Islanders through community discussions, small-group discussions, and interviews with individuals. Please keep this opportunity in mind as a means for members of your community to lend their voices to this initiative. If you would like to discuss setting up a discussion or interview, please email EdVoicesRI@ride.ri.gov.

A brief summary of the entire design process for the strategic plan is posted on RIDE's [website](#).

We have embarked on an ambitious project, and, with your help and participation, I know that we can develop a dynamic and ambitious strategic plan that will improve the lives of our students and their families for years to come.

Best,

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